

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for total consideration given the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12-17, 19-23, and 25 were pending prior to the second non-final Office Action. Claims 14 and 20 have been cancelled and claims 26-29 have been added through this Reply. Thus, claims 1, 2, 4-10, 12, 13, 15-17, 19-23, and 25-29 are currently pending of which claims 1, 9, 16, and 22 are independent. Claims 1, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, and 22 have been amended through this Reply. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims in light of the amendment and remarks presented herein, and earnestly seek timely allowance of all pending claims.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Applicants thank the Examiner for granting a Personal Interview with the Applicants' representative on November 5, 2007. During the Interview, deficiencies of the alleged obviousness rejection and possible amendments to the independent claims were discussed. Particularly, the Examiner suggested that an amendment to independent claims 1, 9, 16, and 22 by further clarifying how the removable portion of the keyboard is released based on fingerprint identification of a user would overcome the outstanding prior art rejection. *Please see the Interview Summary.*

AMENDMENT

Although Applicants do not necessarily agree that any amendment is necessary to further distinguish the claimed invention, independent claims 1, 9, 16, and 22 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner during the Interview in order to expedite prosecution. For example, claim 1 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*,

“a removable section . . . being removably coupleable in a snap-fit fashion to a connector located on the base . . . and is configurable in an abutment relationship with the base for a user selectable separation process corresponding to the biometric characteristic of the user;

wherein the biometric reader is configured to send a signal so as to release the removable section from the connector responsive to the biometric characteristic of the user; and

wherein the selectable separation process is facilitated by transverse grooves or channels either located on the base or the removable section in substantially perpendicular to the connector.” *Emphasis added.*

Claim 16 has also been amended to include the above-identified claim feature with minor variations in wording.

Claim 9 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*,

“a second keyboard housing . . . to a connector located on the first keyboard housing . . . and is configurable in an abutment relationship with the first keyboard housing for a user selectable separation process corresponding to the biometric characteristic of the user to trigger a stand-alone self-powered mode to trigger an input to a processor link for user-based input with the second key-board housing,

wherein the biometric reader is configured to send an electrical signal to facilitate mechanical release of the second keyboard housing from the connector responsive to the biometric characteristic of the user.” *Emphasis added.*

Claim 22 has also been amended to include the above-identified claim feature with minor variations in wording. Furthermore, claims 6 and 13 have been amended merely to address informal issues and to enhance clarity. It is respectfully submitted that the amendment made to the claims does not add any new matter to the application. Support for this amendment can be found on Fig. 7 and Fig. 9 of the Specification.

35 U.S.C. § 103 REJECTION – Batra, Salmon, Cheng, Lin,

A. The Examiner rejects claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8, 16, 17, and 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Batra (US Patent 6,317,061)[hereinafter "Batra"], in view of Salmon (Pub. No. 2003/0048256)[hereinafter "Salmon"] and further in view of Lin (US 6,056,458) [hereinafter "Lin"]. Applicants respectfully traverse.

For a Section 103 rejection to be proper, a *prima facie* case of obviousness must be established. See *M.P.E.P.* 2142. One requirement to establish *prima facie* case of obviousness is that the prior art references, when combined, must teach or suggest all claim limitations. See

M.P.E.P. 2142; M.P.E.P. 706.02(j). Thus, if the cited references fail to teach or suggest one or more elements, then the rejection is improper and must be withdrawn.

Independent claims 1 and 16 have been amended to further clarify that the removable section (claim 1) or the removable alphanumeric section (claim 16) is configurable in an abutment relationship with the base (claim 1) [or keyboard housing (claim 16)] for a user selectable separation process corresponding to the biometric characteristic of the user, wherein the biometric reader is configured to send a signal so as to release the removable section from the base (claim 1) [or keyboard housing (claim 16)] responsive to the biometric characteristic of the user, and wherein the selectable separation process is facilitated by transverse grooves or channels either located on the base (claim 1) [or keyboard housing (claim 16)] or the removable section in substantially perpendicular to the connector. As acknowledged by the Examiner during the Interview of November 5, 2007, none of the cited prior art references, either alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the above-identified claim feature of independent claims 1 and 16. Although Salmon teaches a finger print sensor 13 to validate and allow users to enter a keyboard 3 which is being rolled up in a cylinder 8 in its stored state, Salmon is completely silent on whether the finger print sensor 13 sends a signal to release the keyboard 3 from the roll up cylinder 8. In Salmon, the keyboard is not released from any connector located on a base as required by claims 1 and 16. Batra and Lin do not fulfill at least this deficiency of Salmon. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 1 and 16 are not rendered unpatentable over Batra in view of Salmon and Lin.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1 and 16 are allowable over Batra, Salmon, and Lin. Dependent claims 2, 4, 6-8, 17, 19, and 21 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on corresponding independent claim. Claim 20 has been cancelled through this Reply, rendering the rejection of this claim as moot.

B. Claims 9, 10, 12-15, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Batra, in view of Salmon, and further in view of Lin (US 6,529,145)

[hereinafter "Lin '145"] and Lin. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claim 14 has been cancelled through this Reply, rendering the rejection of this claim as moot.

As mentioned above, amended independent claims 9 and 22 now recite, *inter alia*, "a second keyboard housing (claim 9) [or a removable keyboard portion (claim 22)]. . . to a connector located on the first keyboard housing (claim 9) [or the keyboard housing (claim 22)] . . . and is configurable in an abutment relationship with the first keyboard housing (claim 9) [or the keyboard housing (claim 22) for a user selectable separation process corresponding to the biometric characteristic of the user to trigger a stand-alone self-powered mode to trigger an input to a processor link for user-based input with the second key-board housing (claim 9) [or a removable keyboard portion (claim 22)], wherein the biometric reader is configured to send an electrical signal to facilitate mechanical release of the second keyboard housing (claim 9) [or a removable keyboard portion (claim 22)] from the connector responsive to the biometric characteristic of the user." Emphasis added. As acknowledged by the Examiner during the Interview of November 5, 2007, none of the cited prior art references, either alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the above-identified claim feature of independent claims 9 and 22.

Although Salmon teaches a finger print sensor 13 to validate and allow users to enter a keyboard 3 which is being rolled up in a cylinder 8 in its stored state, Salmon is completely silent on whether the finger print sensor 13 sends an electrical signal to mechanically release the keyboard 3 from the roll up cylinder 8. In Salmon, the keyboard is not released from any connector as required by claims 9 and 22. Batra, Lin '145, and Lin do not fulfill at least this deficiency of Salmon. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 9 and 22 are not rendered unpatentable over Batra in view of Salmon and Lin '145, and further in view of Lin.

Dependent claims 10, 12, 13, 15, and 23 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on corresponding independent claim.

C. Dependent claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Batra, in view of Salmon, and further in view of Lin and Cheng (US Pub. No. 2003/0174123) [hereinafter "Cheng"] and dependent claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Batra, in view of Salmon and Lin, and Lin '145, and further in view of Cheng. These claims are at least allowable by virtue of their dependency on corresponding independent claim.

D. New claims 26-29 are at least allowable by virtue of their dependency on corresponding independent claim.

Conclusion


In view of the above remarks and amendment, it is believed that all pending claims are allowable.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Ali M. Imam Reg. No. 58,755 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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